

HUBERT SUMLIN'S BLUES PARTY

featuring

Ronnie
EARL

Ron
LEVY

Mighty Sam
McCLAIN

Greg
PICCOLO

Jerry
PORTNO



BT-1036

BLACK
MAGAZINE



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Hubert Sumlin's Blues Party

- 1 **Hidden Charms** 1:55
- 2 **West Side Soul** 2:27
- 3 **A Soul That's Been Abused** 7:15
- 4 **Letter To My Girlfriend** 2:17
- 5 **How Can You Leave Me, Little Girl?** 4:46
- 6 **Can't Call You No More** 2:42
- 7 **Blue Guitar** 5:15
- 8 **Down In the Bottom** 2:44
- 9 **Poor Me, Pour Me** 2:37
- 10 **Living the Blues** 4:40

Hubert Sumlin guitar, vocals
(tracks 5 & 10)

Mighty Sam McClain vocals
(tracks 1, 3, 6, 8)

Michael "Mudcat" Ward bass

Ronnie Earl guitar and slide guitar

Ron Levy piano, organ, vocals
(track 9)

Greg Piccolo tenor saxophone,
vocals (track 4)

Jerry Portnoy harmonica

John Rossi drums

Dave Maxwell piano (tracks 6-8)

Doug James baritone saxophone

Bob Enos trumpet



**Produced by Hammond Scott
and Ronnie Earl**



"To blues fans, Mr. Sumlin's solos are instantly recognizable. They are neither melodies nor standard blues licks, but jagged single notes—s shrieks and plunks and shivering moans. In its angularity, its careful textures and its unswerving syncopation, Mr. Sumlin's playing is unfailingly modern, an influence on everyone from the Rolling Stones to Captain Beefheart; it is also as volatile and expressive as the best blues singing."

Jon Pareles
The New York Times

Hubert Sumlin was born in Greenwood, Mississippi in 1931 and like most of his contemporaries, seemed destined to a life spent picking cotton on the plantations of the Delta. When he was 14 years old, however, Hubert witnessed his first Howlin' Wolf recital and promptly decided on a new career goal: traveling bluesman.

As Wolf once explained to blues scholar Peter Guralnick, he had "come in possession of Hubert in West Memphis. I partly raised him from a kid. See, by my playing around the country he fell in love with me and he wanted to stay with me so I just kept him."

In 1953, Hubert departed the South for Chicago, where he took up permanent residence in Howlin' Wolf's band and except for a brief stint with Muddy Waters, maintained his position as Wolf's lead guitarist until the master's death in 1976.

During their tenure together, Wolf and Hubert recorded such blues classics as "Spoonful," "The Red Rooster" and "I Ain't Superstitious" for Chess Records, as well as knocking each other's front teeth out and jamming with such upstarts as Bill Wyman, Steve Winwood and Eric Clapton, who proclaimed Hubert's style "just the weirdest."

With the exception of a few albums released in France, Hubert's solo recordings have been nonexistent. That is, until the day in September of 1986, when guitarist Ronnie Earl telephoned Black Top Records producer Hammond Scott, attempting to arrange a recording session with Hubert and promising an all-star band if the deal went down. Hammond thought about it for an hour and called Ronnie back, telling him to book the studio. A month later, the sessions for "Hubert Sumlin's Blues Party" were underway.

Hammond arrived in Boston with soul singer Mighty Sam McClain, who Hammond considered "the equal of Bobby Bland or Little Milton." Mighty Sam, incredibly had never heard of Howlin' Wolf or Hubert Sumlin, with whom he immediately became fast friends. During these sessions, overcome by excitement, Hubert neither slept, nor stopped grinning. The players and producers had the same problem. Listeners, beware, then: we suspect the blues magic of Hubert Sumlin and associates to be highly contagious. Party with caution!

—Bunny Matthews

Accommodations for Messrs. Scott and McClain courtesy Cleve Johnson, Four Seasons Hotel, Boston
Mighty Sam McClain appears courtesy Orleans Records
Special thanks: Wyeth Persons, Rhelda Ryan, Natalie V. Scott and Jerry Beaudoin Music
Typography by GraphPro
Art direction and illustration by Bunny Matthews

For information regarding the documentary film "Hubert Sumlin: Living the Blues," contact Jim Kent, Boston University, College of Communications, 640 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02215.

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- 1 **Hidden Charms** 1:55
(W. Dixon/Arc Music BMI)
- 2 **West Side Soul** 2:27
(H. Sumlin, R. Earl/Black Top Pub. BMI)
- 3 **A Soul That's Been Abused** 7:15
(R. Earl/Black Top Pub. BMI)
- 4 **Letter To My Girlfriend** 2:17
(E. Jones/Venice Music BMI)
- 5 **How Can You Leave Me, Little Girl?** 4:46
(H. Sumlin/Black Top Pub. BMI)
- 6 **Can't Call You No More** 2:42
(R. Earl/Black Top Pub. BMI)
- 7 **Blue Guitar** 5:15
(E. Hooker/Duchess Music BMI)
- 8 **Down In the Bottom** 2:44
(C. Burnett/Arc Music BMI)
- 9 **Poor Me, Pour Me** 2:37
(R. Levy/Black Top Pub. BMI)
- 10 **Living the Blues** 4:40
(H. Sumlin/Black Top Pub. BMI)

Hubert Sumlin guitar, vocals (tracks 5 & 10)
Mighty Sam McClain vocals (tracks 1, 3, 6, 8)
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Doug James baritone saxophone
Bob Enos trumpet

Produced by Hammond Scott and Ronnie Earl

Executive producers: Leo Prosser and Nauman S. Scott
 Recorded October 1986 at Newbury Sound, Boston
 Recording engineer: Paul Arnold, assisted by Dana Becker
 Mixing engineer: Larry Wallace, assisted by Bill Rollow
 Mixed by Larry Wallace and Hammond Scott at The House, Denton TX
 Note: Hubert Sumlin is heard on the left channel throughout; Ronnie Earl on the right.
 Additional remote recording on track 5 cut at The House.
 Art direction and illustration by Bunny Matthews
 CD Adaptation by Nancy Jean Anderson



BLACK TOP

*Paving the way
to your soul*

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